The NEW PLAYS

"New Lady Bantock" Struggles Patiently With Servant Problem.

BY CHARLES DARNTON.

SERVANTS can never be depended upon to add to the joy of life. Those at Wallack's Theatre last night made a rather dull job of "The New Lady Bantock," a comedy by Jerome K. Jerome that missed its chance by not being a farce.

English servants, it must be granted, are not to be sniffed at—some of our oldest families and newest apartment-houses have them—but when it comes to stage work they are not always the whole feather duster by a long reach. In "The Night of the Party," some years ago, they were treated as they deserved to be by Mr. Wheedon Grossmith, but in "The New Lady Bantock" last night they were treated with too much consideration and too little humor by Mr. Jerome. They were like the relatives of Nina who didn't keep "His House in Order," and they got on your nerves instead of your funny-bone.

The acting was better than the play. Miss Fannie Ward, who spelled her role "Fanny," brought the atmosphere of the music hall to Bantock Hall, and kept it alive in spite of the deadly influence of the servants on the job and Old Lady Bantock on the wall. When Fanny arrived with her lordly husband and the remark, "I hope you're going to like me," you put yourself in her servants' place and began to weigh Miss Ward's acting virtues. There was no mistaking the challenge of that first speech. It came to you on the bound. Miss Ward, through Mr. Jerome, threw down the glove and left you to pick it up.

Fannie Ward as Fanny.

Before sitting down she waited for the lights to be turned up to show her in all her pinkness. The lining of her coat matched her complexion, and the plume in her hat gave the last touch to a picture of rosy expectation. Two maiden aunts, who looked like a sketch team from the Ladies' Home Journal, hadn't been able to make up their minds about the lights. They had feared that Fanny might be guilty of "painting God's work."

Far be it from us to say anything like that! But the fact remained that Fanny called for lights, with all the assurance of a "star actress," and she waited until her call was answered. Then she proceeded to make herself as comfortable as the circumstances would permit. All went as well as a little music hall singer could expect until Bennett, the butler, stalked into the room. Horrors! Fanny couldn't speak until she was left alone with the butler. May we never see another plot served upon a tray if he wasn't her uncle!

Then Mr. Jerome trotted out other Bennetts—housekeeper, maids and footmen—all relatives of Fanny, and infinitely superior to her in their own opinions. They were stiffly respectable. The situation had amusing possibilities, but it soon became tedious.

The butler, acted by Charles Cartwright as though he were playing to an audience in heaven, developed into an infernal bore who drove your sense of humor into your shoes. He was a side-whiskered calamity. The other servants had less to say, and were, therefore, more endurable. Miss Terese Deagle did some heavy standing around as the housekeeper, and Miss Margaret Fuller and Miss Perdita Hudspeth were very good maids, as English maids go. Miss Leila Repton and Miss Margaret Grey, as the maiden aunts, were as much alike as two cups of tea. The "types" were good—if you cared for them.

Charles Cartwright as Martin Bennett

But the comedy was stodgy. It was like a mixture of weak tea and meat pie. Mr. Jerome's humor seemed far, far away. It was about as lively as a back number of Punch. Miss Ward, however, made the best of her earlier opportunities, and while her voice was harsh at times, you were willing to make allowances for a music hall singer. She was far from being a stranger to the type. Her two front teeth seemed disposed to make room for her words, which invariably came with an American accent. Her pert style of beauty changed in the second act when she wore a black silk dress with an enormous bustle, that had belonged to Old Lady Bantock.

But old clothes do not make new plays. Nothing happened until Fanny's former stage companions came down to see her, and this scene, which promised to be lively, fell as flat as the song Miss Ward tried to sing. One look at the girls was enough to convince you that Miss Ward was on the safe side of any possible beauty contest. This visit, of course, shocked the servants, and led Fanny to assert her rights by giving them "notice." Miss Ward's attempt to be pathetic about it was as ridiculous as the situation itself, and her remark to the theatrical manager, "My scene, if you don't mind, George," only resulted in convicting Fanny of "talking shop."

Mr. Robert McWade jr. acted the theatrical manager as though he knew him, and Mr. John W. Dean seemed very happy as the husband who urged Fanny to take off her hat and stay in the last act, and then got her butler-uncle's "consent."

When you stop to consider that Mr. Jerome takes four acts to lead up to this "idea," you are obliged to admit that "The New Lady Bantock" struggles patiently with the servant problem.

The Jollys' Bull Pup

By H. Coultaus

The Parson and the Dentist.

A CLERGYMAN went to have his teeth fixed by a dentist. When the work was done the dentist declined to accept more than a nominal fee. The parson, in return for this favor, insisted later on the dentist accepting a volume of the reverend gentleman's own writing. It was a disquisition on the Psalms, and on the fly leaf he had inscribed this appropriate quotation:

"And my mouth shall show forth thy praise!"—Harper's Weekly.

A Blacksmith Oculist.

GEN. BOOTH'S operation for cataract recalls the wonderful native skill of a blacksmith near York, who some forty years ago successfully performed this delicate operation on several of his fellow villagers, says the London Chronicle. The fact became known to a doctor in the neighborhood, who so admired the blacksmith's skill that he provided the means for his education as an oculist. To the blacksmith the removal of the cataract was no more than a mechanical feat, but when he became acquainted with the structure of the human eye and its amazing delicacy he was so overpowwered by the rashness of what he had done in ignorance that he lost his nerve, and with the fear of knowledge he insisted on returning to his anvil.

Oh, Father!

"FATHER, you must not drop your final 'g's.'"

Thus Gwendolyn, obsessed by nouveau culture, to father, retired pork packer.

"But I haven't been droppin' 'em."

"There you go. Droppin'.' And you say 'comin',' and 'goin',' and 'eatin',' without any 'g' sound at all. It's awful!"

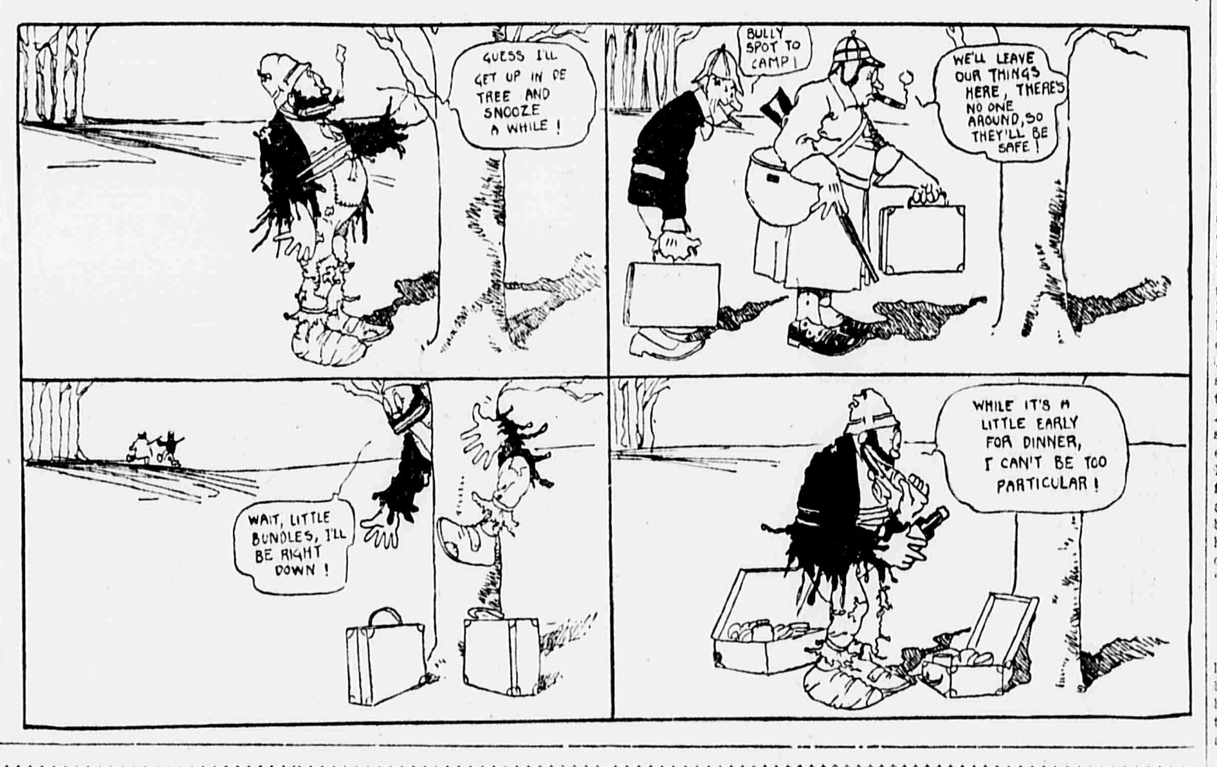
"Gwenny."

"Yes?"

"May I drop the final 'g' in egg?"—Philadelphia Ledger.

Panhandle Pete

By George McManus



The Barrier

Love and Gold Hunting In the Frozen Klondike

By Rex Beach, Author of "The Spoilers."

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Lieut. Burrell, stationed at Fiambeau, a frontier trading post, falls in love with Necia, a beautiful girl (who passes as the daughter of John Gale, the post trader, and Alisna, Gale's Indian squaw). Burrell and Necia become engaged. Poleon Doret, Gale's young French partner, secretly loves Necia. Lee, a miner, discovers a rich gold district. Necia and Burrell stake out three claims for the girl. Gale, Poleon and Lee go to the district, accompanied by two professional "bad men," Stark and Runnion. Gale recognizes Stark as a man who long ago wronged him. Necia is warned that Burrell will be disgraced if he marries a halfbreed girl. This makes her miserable. Burrell tries to reassure her, but she is still oppressed by the dread that their marriage will ruin his career. Gale, noting Necia's unhappiness, and learning the cause, resolves to tell Burrell a mysterious secret.

CHAPTER XIII.

(Continued.)

Stark Takes a Hand in the Game.

NECIA had no idea whither she went; only to flee from her kin, who couldn't understand, to hide under cover in some solitary place, to let the darkness swallow her up, so that she might give way to her grief and be just a poor, weak woman. So with a dull and aching heart, she wandered, bareheaded, barenecked, half-demented, and wholly oblivious to her surroundings, without sense of her incongruous attire or of the water that squeezed up through the soggy moss at her tread and soaked her frail slippers. On she stumbled through the murk like some fair creature cast out and banished.

The night was cloudy and a wind came sighing from the north, tossing the girl's hair and tugging at the careless folds of her dress, but she heard nothing save the devil's tattoo that rang in her head, and felt nothing beyond the pain at throat and breast, which in time became so bitter that the tears were wrung from her dry eyes, and she began to weep in a pitiful woman fashion, as if her heart would burst. The first drops cleared a way for others, and soon she was sobbing freely, alone and without solace, lost in the night.

She had not succeeded in thoroughly isolating herself, however, for a man who was steering his course by the sense of feel, and the wind's direction heard her and paused. His steps were muffled in the soft footing, so that she had no warning of his presence until he was near enough to distinguish her dimly where she leaned against the log wall of a half-completed cabin.

To his question, "What's the trouble here?" she made no answer, but moved away, whereupon he detained her. "There's something wrong. Who are you, anyhow?"

"It's only Necia, Mr. Stark," said the girl, at which he advanced and took her by the arm.

"What ails you, child? What in the world are you doing here? Come! It's only a step to my cabin; you must come in and rest awhile, and you'll soon be all right. Why, you'll break your neck in this darkness."

She hung back, but he compelled her to go with him in spite of her unwillingness.

"Now, now," he admonished, with unusual kindliness for him, "you know you're my little friend, and I can't let you go on this way; it's scandalous. I won't stand for it. I like you too much."

In truth, he had done things during these last few weeks to make her think so, having never missed an opportunity to stop and pass a word with her, at the same time showing her a queer courtesy and consideration quite foreign to his saturnine habits. She had never mentioned the fact to her father or the others, for she had developed a sort of sympathy for the man, and felt that she understood him better than they did.

He led her inside his cabin and closed the door in the face of the night wind before he struck a light.

"I can't stand to see you cry," he repeated, as he adjusted the wick. "Now, as soon as"—— He stopped in astonishment, for he had turned to behold, instead of the little half-breed girl, this slender, sorrowful stranger in her amazingly wonderful raiment.

"By"—— He checked himself insensibly, and stood motionless for a long time, while she wiped her eyes and, womanlike, straightened out her gown and smoothed her hair with little feminine touches.

"I—I—hope you'll excuse me for acting this way," she smiled at him, piteously; then, observing his strange features, "Why, what is the matter, Mr. Stark; are you angry?"

His hawklike face was strained and colorless, his black eyes fierce and eager, his body bent as if to pounce upon a victim. In truth he was now the predatory animal.

"No," he replied, as if her question carried no meaning; then, coming to himself, "No—no! of course not, but—you gave me a start. You reminded me of some one. How do you come to be dressed like that? I never knew you had such clothes."

"Poleon brought them from Dawson; they are the first I ever had."

He shook his head in a slow, puzzled fashion.

"You look just like a white girl—I mean—I don't know what I mean." This time he roused himself fully, the effort being more like a shudder.

"So I have always thought," she said, and her eyes filled again.

"Your skin is like milk beneath your tan, and—I don't mean any disrespect, but—— Well, I'm just so surprised! Come over here and sit down while I mix you something to put the heart back into you."

He shoved forward a big chair with a wolfskin flung over it, into which she sank dejectedly, while he stepped to the shelves beside the Yukon stove and took down a bottle and some glasses. She glanced about with faint curiosity, but the interior of the cabin showed nothing out of the ordinary, consisting as it did of one room with a cot in the corner, upon which were tumbled blankets, and above which was a row of pegs. Opposite was a sheet iron box stove supported knee-high on a tin-capped framework of wood, and in the centre a table with oilcloth cover. Around the walls were some cooking utensils, a few cases of canned goods and clothes hanging in a row.

"I'm not fixed up very well yet," he apologized; "I've been too busy at the saloon to waste time on living quarters. But it's comfortable enough for an old roadster like me, for I've bruised around the frontier so long that I've learned there's only three things necessary to a man's comfort—warm clothes, a full stomach, and a dry place to sleep. All the rest that goes to make a man content he had inside him, and I'm not the kind to be satisfied, no matter where I am or what I have. I never was that kind, so I just don't make the attempt."

He was talking to give her leeway, and when he had concocted a weak toddy, insisted that she must drink it, which she did listlessly, while he rambled on.

"I've noticed a few things in my life, Miss Necia, and one of them is that it often does a heap of good to let out and talk things over; not that a fellow gains any real advantage from disseminating his troubles, but it serves to sort of ease his mind. Folks don't often come to me for advice or sympathy. I don't have it to give, but maybe it will help you to tell me what caused this night-marauding expedition of yours." Seeing that she hesitated he went on: "I suppose there's a lot of reasons why you shouldn't confide in me—I don't like that old man of yours, nor any of your friends; but maybe that's why I'm interested. If any of them has upset you, I'll take particular pleasure in helping you get even."

"I don't want to get even, and there is nothing to tell," said Necia, "except a girl's troubles and I can't talk about them." She smiled a painful, crooked smile at him.

"Your old man has been rough to you?"

"No, no! Nothing of that sort."

"Then it's that soldier?" he quizzed, shrewdly. "I knew you cared a heap for him. Don't he love you?"

"Yes! That's the trouble, and he wants to marry me; he swears he will in spite of everything."

"See here! I don't quite follow. I thought you liked him—he's the kind most women go daffy over."

"Like him!" The girl trembled with emotion. "Like him! Why—why, I would do anything to make him happy."

"I guess I must be kind of dull," Stark said, perplexedly.

"Don't you see? I've got to give him up—I'm a squaw."

"Squaw? With those shoulders?"

Stark checked himself, for he found he was rejoicing in his enemy's defeat, and was in danger of betraying himself to the girl. In every encounter the young man had bested him, and these petty defeats had crystallized his antipathy to Burrell into a hatred so strong that he had begun to lie awake nights planning a systematic quarrel. For he was the kind of man who throve upon contentions; so warped in soul that when no man offered him offense he brooded over fancied wrongs and conjured up a cause for enmity.

His path was strewn from the border North with the husks of fierce brawls, and he bore the ineradicable mark of the killer, carrying always in his brain those scars that hate had seared. In his eyes forever slumbered a flame waiting to be blown to life, and when embroiled in feuds or bickerings a custom had grown upon him to fight these fights in secret many times, until of nights he would lie in solitary darkness writhing in spirit as he hounded his man to desperation, or forced him into a corner where he might slake his thirsty vengeance.

(To Be Continued.)

THE WITCHING HOUR.

Augustus Thomas's great play, turned by himself into a story which would cost you $1.50 in book form, begins as a serial in next Monday's Evening World.

Sayings of Mrs. Solomon

Being the Confessions of the Seven Hundredth Wife.

Translated By Helen Rowland.

HELEN ROWLAND

BEHOLD, my Daughter, there are many styles of husbands and they come in assorted materials—even as other household furnishings.

Yea, there be wooden husbands and husbands of iron, brassy husbands and husbands of mush, putty husbands and many fancy combinations in odd varieties.

Lo! I charge thee, wed not a WOODEN man, for thou art like to find him HOLLOW inside. Verily, a wooden husband hath not a thought, nor an emotion, nor an inspiration, nor an original idea except it be concerning something new to have for dinner. He talketh in "Ummms!" and carrieth on a conversation by grunts. He yawneth vacantly at jokes and knoweth poetry only by the way the lines are cut off at the end, and recognizeth a "picture" merely by the fact that it hangeth in a frame. He greeteth thy passionate kisses with a pat upon the head and thy passionate tantrums with a smile of pity. Yea, he is deadly!

Yet, a MUSHY husband shall write thee much poetry, but few checks. He shall give thee much gush, but little cash; many compliments, but few hats.

And a BRASSY husband is an abomination! For he spendeth his days ogling OTHER women and taketh the centre of the stage at all thy dinner parties. He rejoiceth in the sound of his own voice, and adoreth himself, like a clothing advertisement, in fancy socks and thy stickpins that he may dazzle strange damsels. And all the days of thy life thou shalt be unto him as naught but a BACKGROUND.

But an IRON husband is the bitterest fruit of the lemon tree; for he regardeth home as a small Turkish Empire and himself as a Sultan by divine right. He looketh upon his wife as a "possession" and dictateth unto her concerning all things from the shape of her hats to her opinions and the brand of the baby's milk.

Yet, lo! amongst these, thou must somehow make thy choice, my Daughter; for ALL men are MATERIAL, but a HUSBAND is IMMATERIAL. Selah!

The Subway Bun

He Buys an Apple at the Bridge and Starts for Baffin's Bay.

"I WISH," said the Subway Bun to the Conductor, "you'd tell me how I got on the Brooklyn elevated yesterday morning."

LINDSAY DENISON.

"I know this much," said his friend the Conductor, "when I put you off at Fousteenth, you circled around on the platform once or twice and then, instead of going up to the street, you went up to the platform and made a run across to a downtown train as though you'd forgotten an engagement with a millionaire."

"That helps some," said the Subway Bun. "Come to think of it, I remember I bought a nice red apple from a stand in City Hall Park when I got off at the bridge, and then I give it to a marine from the Navy-Yard I meet in Perry's drug store, and the other marine that is with him is crying because he can't have an apple, too, and I go back to the fruit stand to get another one for him. But when I get back to Perry's the marines are gone and I start over the bridge to the Navy-Yard to find 'em. This is about 1 o'clock. About half-past two I am rounding up sleeping newsboys under the Brooklyn end of the bridge. Did I go to the Navy-Yard? Don't ask me, because I forget. But it is half-past two o'clock and I have a drove of trained newsboys, each with a slice of apple, rehearsing them in the grand old 'Wizard of Oz' chorus:

"Avast! Belay!
What, ho! for Baffin's Bay!
And he kissed her with an awful
Fishng smack!"

"They like it. I like it. But a wagonload of nowspapers comes over the bridge and puts the company to the bad. I get mad and go across the plaza to tell a guy with a white jacket about it.

"Next I'm leaning over a railing that is so far up in the air that I think I'm top of the Singer Building. There were little lights twinkling all around way down there on earth, millions and millions of them. Some were white and some were yellow and some were blue. And up from the sleeping earth came a soothing murmur like the snoring of a giant child. It was all mighty comforting and beautiful and the more I contemplate, the surer I am that I have been run over by Chief Croker's automobile and have been translated to the souses' heaven.

"I shake hands with myself when I think what my careless kindness to those little boys down under the bridge has brought me. Taken in the midst of my good deeds. And when I think of some of the fool things I might have been doing when Croker hit me, the tears rise to my eyes. And there ain't much of any time when that howling red devil of Croker's wasn't likely to land an absorbed or an absorbent citizen in kingdom come, either. It looks to me like the best piece of luck that ever happened has come to me at the very end of my earthly career.

"I get to thinking about the boys and everybody that has deserved better of life than I have, and I'm wishing I could get word down to them somewhere and give them a little steer on how to join me. For lovely and serene as it all is, it is undeniably lonely. And that gives me a new thought. It can't be that I'm the only genuine inhabitant of the jag corner of the land of the saints. There must be some others around somewhere.

"Just then I hear footsteps behind me and turn and see a smoked angel coming up a long platform toward me. He wouldn't pass Gutzon Borglum, or the St. John's Cathedral architects, either, on form; but I figure he has to be an angel. What else could he be? He has on a heavy khaki uniform and a visored cap and he seems to be timid of me to excess. I dope it out that he is some sort of a guide they have sent to lead me to the heavenly bar. He stops just out of my reach and says:

"'De ticket agent say, please sah,' he says, doing footwork as though he was going to take it on the run, 'that he doan know where dat station is you was askin' about, sah, less'n it 'a on de Long Island Railroad.'

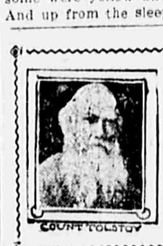
"'What station, Ebon Seraph?' I inquire.

"'De one what you was askin' de way to, sah,' says he.

"'Ah,' I say, some depressed, without knowing why, 'and what station was that, Ham Ben Ham?'

"'Baffin's Bay, sah,' says he.

"And then I dig up a nickel and beat it from the East New York loop back to Fourteenth street and get in just as the landlady is starting the fire for breakfast."



COUNT TOLSTOY

My "Cycle of Readings,"

By Count Tolstoy.

—— Translated by Herman Bernstein. ——

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The italicized paragraphs are Count Tolstoy's original comments on the subject.

War

FEB. 9.

THE material evil caused by war, however enormous, is insignificant in comparison with the evil of perverted perceptions concerning good and evil which it brings into the souls of the simple working people who think but little.

A CHILD, meeting another child with a smile, expresses a kind joy; even so it is with every unspoiled man. And yet a man belonging to one nation, without even seeing the man of the other nation, hates him and prepares and causes him suffering and death. What great criminals, therefore, are those who invite people to such feelings and such acts.

THE finest weapon is the unblessed weapon.

And therefore a sensible man will not depend upon it. He prizes above all peace and tranquillity. He conquers, but he does not rejoice.

To rejoice over a victory means to rejoice over the killing of people, and he who rejoices over the destruction of people cannot attain his aim.—Lao-Tse.

"DIVIDE and reign"—this is the golden rule of human oppressors of all kinds. Only by arousing racial animosity, national hatred and local prejudices, only by stirring up some nations against others, can aristocracy and despotism be established and maintained. Thus he who wishes to liberate the people should raise them above the feelings of animosity, otherwise he will not have any success.—Henry George.

WAR is a condition under which the basest and most depraved people gain power and glory.